

COWES TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Projects Committee Meeting held in the Town Council Office, Northwood House, Cowes on Tuesday 17 October 2017 at 6.15pm

Present: Councillors Taylor (Chair), Adams, J Bartrum, Brown, Fuller and Peacey-Wilcox

In attendance: Kate Gibbs (Assistant Town Clerk), Councillor Wardrop (non-voting)

153. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

154. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a) No declarations of interest were received.
- b) No written requests for dispensation were received.

155. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Projects Committee meeting held on 26 September 2017 were taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

156. UPDATE ON EXISTING PROJECTS

a) **The Cut**

Final drawings for the proposed enhancement of The Cut area have been sent to Island Roads by the Council's Architect. Costings are awaited in due course. There were additional costs for the services of the Architect, Martin Hayles, in relation to an additional meeting on site with all parties involved, further correspondence following the meeting, and revisions to the drawings.

Councillors discussed replacing the current Mural on the wall by the seating area. It was decided to run a competition for local children to design a new mural that will incorporate the words 'Welcome to Cowes'. The closing date will be the end of this school term. Entries will be shortlisted by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chairman of the Projects Committee, with the best three being included in the Spring Town Council's Newsletter, asking for the public to decide the winning design.

RECOMMENDED: That the Finance, Acquisitions and Staffing Committee consider the Architect's additional costs of £475, with the cost to be met from the money set aside for The Cut enhancements.

Actions:

- 1) The Assistant Town Clerk will send an invitation to local schools asking for designs for a new mural, with a deadline of the end of the school term.
- 2) Councillors Fuller, Peacey-Wilcox and Taylor will shortlist the entries after the closing date.

b) **The Shelter**

The materials for the foot rails are on order and are expected to be fitted at the Shelter in the coming weeks.

c) **High Street Pedestrianisation and Bollards**

The Isle of Wight Council's Cabinet Member, Councillor Ian Ward has been requested to expedite the changes to the Prohibition of Driving Order in Cowes High Street by Christmas 2017.

- d) **Northwood Recreation Ground – expanding the Skate Park**
Repairs to the Skate Park were discussed. A quote has been received for repairing worn areas of the tarmac and fixing down loose ramps in the sum of £1,400. Quotations are being sought for sand/wet blasting the underside of the ramps to remove rust. Once obtained, they will be discussed at the next meeting.
RECOMMENDED: That the Finance, Acquisitions and Staffing Committee consider the contractor’s costs of up to £1,400 plus VAT for repairs to the tarmac and loose ramps at the Skate Park.
- e) **Access Audit of the Town**
A meeting is being set up with representatives from Island Roads, Cowes Town Council, Gurnard Parish Council, Northwood Parish Council and Isle Access to prioritise accessibility issues in the town and neighbouring areas.
- f) **Tree Planting and appreciation / National Tree Week 2017**
The Chairman advised that he had given a talk to 100 Year 5 and 6 pupils at Lanesend Primary School to promote tree planting and appreciation. Councillors were reminded that National Tree Week will be held between 27 November and 3 December. The Town Council has already signed up to the National Tree Charter, which this year coincides with the 800th Anniversary of the Charter of the Forest issued by Henry III. The Town Council has received a free tree for signing up to the Charter, a Hornbeam, which will be offered to Northwood Cemetery. Guided walks in Northwood Park and Northwood Cemetery are planned for National Tree Week.
The order of 5 new trees for Northwood Park have been delivered, with one already having been planted.
Actions:
1) The Assistant Town Clerk will write to the Friends of Northwood Cemetery to offer the free tree for planting at the Cemetery.
2) Councillor Taylor will organise and promote the guided walks for National Tree Week, and the Tree Dressing culminating on 3 December.
- g) **Activities to promote Cowes Town Council**
Councillors discussed ways of promoting the Town Council and its activities at local events.
Action: The Assistant Town Clerk will explore table-top / floor standing display stands.
- h) **Promoting use of the Outdoor Gym**
Discussions are ongoing with Age UK and Age Friendly Island to explore ways of encouraging the use of the outdoor gym equipment.
Action: Councillor J Bartrum will discuss this idea further with Age UK and Age Friendly Island.
- i) **Free Sunday Parking**
The Town Council approached Cowes Business Association (CBA) with regard to offering free parking on a Sunday during the run-up to Christmas, to encourage visitors to the town and its businesses. The CBA felt that not all the town’s shops were open on a Sunday. An alternative has been suggested for late night opening on the last Thursday in November. Free parking will be available from 6pm in the Isle of Wight Council’s car parks in the town, which is hoped will encourage shoppers. There being no further action for the Projects Committee, this item will be removed from the agenda.

- j) **Cowes Webcam**
There was no update on this project.

157. NEW PROJECTS

- a) **Empty Shops**
An initiative was discussed whereby local artists could display their paintings and other art in the windows of empty shops. This scheme had worked well in other areas of the country.
Action: Councillor J Bartrum will assess the empty shops in the town and try and identify ownership.

- b) **Railings on the steps at Northwood Park**
A concern has been raised regarding the lack of railings on the steps leading into Northwood Park from the Rotunda car park. The wall on either side is very low at this access point. Other steps in the Park have hand rails installed to assist users when ascending or descending.
Action: Councillor Taylor will contact Northwood House Charitable Trust Company Ltd to request that they consider installing railings at the above-mentioned location.

- c) **Themed Weekends**
The idea of having a themed weekend in Cowes, on an annual basis, was discussed. This could promote the town at a time of year when visitor numbers are lower. Several ideas were discussed.
Actions:
 - 1) Councillor Adams will research activities carried out in other areas, including a Treasure Hunt.
 - 2) Councillor J Bartrum and the Assistant Town Clerk will look at booking a Queen Victoria lookalike for next year's Festive Light switch-on.

158. MAINTENANCE ISSUES WITH EXISTING PROJECTS

- a) **Street Furniture**
The Town Clock on Shooters Hill will be repainted shortly.

159. ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON FUTURE AGENDAS

None were raised.

The proceedings terminated at 7.17pm.

CHAIRMAN